# AFGHAN INTELLECTUALS IN EXILE: PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

**Sayd Bahaouddin Majrooh**

The leftist military coup in April 1978 in Kabul and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan since 1979 have brought upon the country the greatest disaster in its long history. Hundreds of thousands of people were either killed or crippled, or have disappeared in jails; children were maimed physically and morally; thousands of villages were razed to the ground; and the country is still in the process of physical and cultural destruction. One of the most dramatic aspects of the invasion has been that it has already generated the largest refugee population in the world: about 5 million in the neighbouring countries (Pakistan and Iran), some 1.5 million displaced inside the country, and thousands scattered throughout the world. Thus out of 16 million, almost half the population became external or internal refugees. There are children, women, old men, whole ethno-linguistic communities in exile. Their situation has been closely studied by scholars, researchers, and humanitarian helpers. Also, many educated Afghans have become refugees. The present paper will only discuss this aspect, namely, the intellectual dimension of our national disaster. Answers for three basic questions will be explored here: Who are the Afghan intellectuals? What was their situation under

Communism? What has been their fate in exile?

## Who Is an Intellectual?

The concept "intellectual" is apparently a product of Western culture, especially a French cultural phenomenon. Could we apply it to non-Western societies? Strictly speaking, the answer is no. However, the type of individual the concept is supposed to describe, or rather what we are going to make it describe, might be found in other societies either as a product of indigenous conditions or the result of Western influence.

A possible definition of the term "intellectual" we intend to propose will not sound very academic to Western ears, but will, we hope, convey the main idea.

An intellectual is a new type of idol-worshipper, and his idols are abstract ideas such as Reason, Progress, and Revolution--not in the sense of Platonic spiritual concepts, which view the reality of the physical world as a shadow. The new intellectual leans toward Hegelian absolute ideas, which encompass the entire natural and cultural universe.

Generally speaking, an intellectual is an animal who, in order to move, is inclined to use his head instead of his legs and who seems to grow wings which enable him to fly over his own sociocultural barriers in order to see himself and his surroundings in an increasingly broader context. He is a

kind of winged cephalopod. Compared to a man living in a tightly structured society, in which every group and individual behaviour is regulated by custom and tradition and every question finds an answer in well-established social wisdom, the intellectual's approach to life is varied and questioning. As a popular saying in Afghanistan puts it: when an ant starts growing wings, it is the beginning of its end. In a society whose basic value is similarity, the intellectual opts to be different. An integrated society has also its differences: a religious, spiritual leader and a tribal chief are different from the others, but these differences are well inside the limits of sameness. Such different people always existed; they are recognisable, acceptable. But the intellectual is different in another way: he stands out as an individual whose ambition is to think for himself, to understand himself and his world through his own intellectual means. Thus he steps over the boundaries of the sameness. He becomes a stranger. He chooses exile.

A contradictory element has to be added to our proposed definition. In Afghanistan the intellectual was called in Persian "Roshan-Fikr," meaning "enlightened-minded," a lamp which lights up all around himself and beyond. But in our country we were used to a kind of oil lamp which cast a circle of shadow around its immediate surroundings. A popular saying connected with this fact was, "There is always darkness under the lamp." This may be a more or less accurate

description of the intellectual. While he is supposed to perceive broader horizons, he still remains in darkness about his immediate reality. He is a contradiction in himself, but still an important human and cultural phenomenon to be taken into consideration.

## AFGHAN INTELLECTUALS: OLD AND NEW

### The Classic Intellectual and His Cultural Roots

In Islamic civilisation, especially in Persian-Dari-speaking countries, two different educational trends were established: religious studies and literary disciplines.

The former, taught in madrassas (religious schools), were entirely focused on Islamic subjects such as the study of the Holy Qur'an, the Traditions of the Holy Prophet, Fiqh or Shariat Law. Those with an educational background in madrassas had no problem in finding jobs. They became priests, preachers, teachers (by opening their own private madrassas), judges, etc. They were the people of prestige and authority, strict and severe, and often intolerant.

The literary school, or the field of worldly knowledge, covered a large number of subjects. Instead of Arabic, the Persian language was promoted; Arabic was used as a means of access to various religious and nonreligious texts in the same manner as Latin was used in the medieval West. Persian

prose and poetical works were intensively studied; writing skills were developed (which promoted the art of calligraphy). Other important subjects included were: philosophy, logic, natural sciences, medicine, etc. The literary tradition of worldly knowledge persisted side by side with the madrassas, in interaction with madrassas and sometimes in conflict with them. The basic teachings of Islam were common to both schools. The best teacher was one who mastered both fields. Early in the morning he would sit inside the madrassa, with piles of books around him; then each student would come one after the other, one with his religious handbook, another with a book of classic poetry, another with a book of philosophy or medical science, and take his daily lesson.

For the most part, however, the madrassas remained strongly critical of the literary scholars' free style of thinking, their study of Greek sciences, philosophy, and metaphysics, their effort to replace the authority of the Traditions by the authority of Reason. On the whole there was nothing anti-Islamic in the literary trend; the main intention of the philosophers was to expand the religious thinking and open it to other fields of knowledge, to find rational foundations for religion, prophecy, etc. But the religious scholars found, and still find, the rational exploration dangerous, and philosophers constantly lived on the brink of ideological excommunication.

However, in Islamic civilisation, the most valuable contribution to philosophy, sciences, historiography, literature, etc., was made by people belonging to the literary tradition. They were the intellectuals according to the definition proposed here, who were stepping over the barriers of their sociocultural milieu. While the followers of the madrassas were mainly concerned with repeating and preserving the Traditions and were narrowing down knowledge to the limits of established norms, the followers of the literary trends were creating original works, incorporating new elements into their culture, and expanding their own thinking and that of their students towards new horizons.

The Christian Era of the Middle Ages was the most brilliant period of Islamic culture and civilisation. To illustrate the point we have formulated about who is an intellectual, here are some examples from medieval Islamic thinkers:

A scholar like Al-Biruni (10th-11th A.D.) was both an astronomer and a social scientist. He contributed to the scientific knowledge of heavenly bodies, but also studied with scientific objectivity non-Islamic cultures and the religions of India. He took two giant steps over the barriers. His contemporary, ibn-Sina the philosopher (973-1037), composed a treatise on the soul and made rational speculations about prophethood, although subjects such as the

human soul, life after death, divine revelation, etc., were considered strictly religious concerns. While music was and still is considered by the common peoples as a passing entertainment and by the religious authorities as a sin, Al-Farabi the philosopher wrote a book about "The Science of Music."

Both trends--the religious and the literary--declined, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D. However, they continued to follow their own ways of development in two opposite directions: the religious schools narrowed their horizons dogmatically, studying second- and thirdhand commentaries of original texts by great religious thinkers--becoming fossilised, frozen, rejecting everything new; the literary trend continued broadening its horizons until it lost its identity by opening up to Western influences. A new type of intellectual educated in the modern schools replaced the old one as Western imperialism inhibited the growth of indigenous political institutions and encouraged Western philosophy, thought, and action (Dupree, N.H., 1985).

## The Classic Intellectual and the West

Physically, the classic intellectual looked like any other religious scholar: turbaned, bearded, wearing white traditional clothes, strictly performing his religious duties, even preaching. But he was a bibliophile and had his

personal library in which he kept books on various authorised and nonauthorised subjects, mostly handwritten in Persian and Arabic. He spent much of his time reading and writing or receiving people who wished to learn. Sometimes, to earn a living he would practice the old Greek medical art, but usually he belonged to a wealthy family of landowners and engaged in scientific and literary activities for their own sakes or for his own intellectual satisfaction.

In Afghanistan, things began to change at the beginning of the 20th century. The classic intellectuals were the first to be receptive to new ideas coming from the West, while the religious authorities ignored them and later strongly opposed them. The intellectuals eagerly read Western works in Persian, Arabic, and Turkish translations; some of them even learned English or other European languages. Thus centuries-long intellectual stagnation came to an end, but it was also the beginning of the end for the classic type. They were the ants who grew wings.*

Poets, writers and other literary scholars left their provincial homes and came to Kabul, the capital. They became members of the official literary society or found jobs in the government administration. They shaved their beards and put

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*To this list we can add the late Sayd Bahaouddin Majrooh, author of this chapter [eds.].

on Western clothes. Still they were not simple imitators of Western ways. However, this would be the case with the subsequent generation which attended modern, Western-oriented schools. With their strong traditional background and deep roots in the society and its culture, the early 20th century intellectuals assimilated new ideas in a creative way and produced truly original works. Outstanding poets, writers, historians, social and political thinkers--mostly self-appointed instructors--appeared, such as Mahmmud Tarzi, Abdul Hadi Dawi, Muhayuddin Anis, Gulam Mohammad Ghobar, Abdul Hay Habibi, Gul Pasha Ulfat, Qiamuddin Khadim, Abdurraouf Benawa, Sayd Shamsuddin Majrooh, Khalilullah Khalili, Abdurrahman Pajwak, and many others. Thanks to them the first half of the 20th century may be properly called a period of genuine renaissance in arts and literature (Dupree, N.H., 1981).

The classic intellectual of the modern age was deeply impressed first by the scientific and technological achievements of the West and then by new literary forms such as drama, the novel, etc., especially new methods in historical studies. History became a dimension of nation-building. Prior to the new trends, the history of the country went as far back as the beginning of the Islamic period. But now the intellectual was given the opportunity to step over that barrier and proudly push his national history farther and farther back to the pre-Islamic Greco-Buddhic and still older ages.

ages.

The new ideas which fascinated him most were: democracy, progress, individual freedom, sociopolitical reforms, nation, etc. He became a journalist and a pamphleteer and launched the movement for a constitutional monarchy. In his struggle for freedom, he spent long years in jail (Dupree, L., 1980).

## The Classic Intellectual and the Impact of Marxism

Attached to freedom and national independence, the classic type of intellectual was from the start against the colonial powers of the West. But he did not become Marxist, because of his spiritual background and traditional culture. Marxism with its atheistic and materialistic foundations was too much for him to swallow. However, seeing a stagnant society, with uneducated people exploited by religious and political dynasties, he wished to bring about rapid changes and thus became strongly attracted to the new myth of Revolution (Dupree, L., 1979).

The Soviets paid special attention to these intellectuals. While in the West they were unknown, the Russians translated and published their works. For instance, Benawa's poetical work was the subject of a research project in the Moscow Orientalist Institute, whereas Ulfat and other poets and writers were intensively studied. Even my little book in Persian, Ego-Monster (Kabul, 1972), was reviewed in a

magazine of the Soviet Academy.

Many intellectuals of the older generations, such as Tarzi, Anis, Ghobar, Ulfat, and others, died before the leftist coup of 1978 and did not have the chance to see the reality of the Revolution. Others who were still alive went into exile, with the exception of Benawa, the outstanding Pashtu poet who accepted an offer to become ambassador to Libya. Other intellectuals in exile became active with the resistance. These included Professor Khalili, Abdurrahman Pajwak, Sayd Shamsuddin Majrooh, and a few others. Khalili, the last giant of Persian classic poetry, became the most prolific resistance writer and poet. A week prior to his death in exile in Islamabad (Pakistan) on May 3, 1987, at the age of eighty, he was still busy writing and receiving resistance commanders from all parts of Afghanistan. He was also sending messages to the people inside the country. His poems composed in exile are still the best songs of the Afghan resistance.

## Modern Intellectuals: The Vulnerable Generation

The modern intellectual is the product of new schools built according to Western educational systems. The first modern school, Habibia Lycée, with the English language and other new subjects taught by Indian teachers, was opened during the reign of King Habibullah (1901-1919). His son, King Amanullah (1919-1929), who won the right of Afghanistan

to conduct its own foreign affairs in the 1919 Third Anglo Afghan War, also had ambitions to change the country into a European-type society and founded two more lycées: Amania Lycée, with German language and German teachers, and Istiqlal Lycée, with French language and teachers. After 1933, during the reign of King Mohammad Zahir, the number of primary and secondary schools increased. Before and especially after World War II, increasing numbers of Afghans were sent to France, Germany, the USA, and elsewhere for higher studies.

In Afghanistan the new education system had no roots or foundations in the local culture; it did not come as a continuation of the religious educational institutions or the literary schools. Thus, from the start a wide gap separated the present from the past. The traditionalists had neither the ability nor the will to come forward with a genuine solution, nor were the modernists (the classic intellectuals) prepared to face the problems. The modern schools started with new buildings and new types of teachers, who ignored traditional teaching.

An individual educated in the new system also had the chance to spend some years abroad to complete his studies in an institution for higher education in the West. He became a strange phenomenon. He was neither a complete Westerner nor a genuine Easterner. He had lost his roots in his own culture. But also, despite mastering more or less competently the

field he had studied, he had not entirely assimilated Western culture. Thus he became a stranger to his society and to himself. A deeply split personality, he was constantly torn by his internal contradictions. Every normal individual has to face inner psychological tension and live through conflicts between consciousness and subconsciousness. But in the case of our modern Afghan intellectual, the problem had wider cultural and social dimensions. Suppressing his East-conditioned subconscious drives with his West-trained consciousness, he remained a prisoner of his foggy subjectivity and his own over-evaluated self-image. With his Western outlook, he would deprecate his own culture and society, about which he knew little. His personal action was seldom in harmony with his rhetoric. For instance, he would reject on principle the vendetta system of the Pushtun, and considered it primitive; but when his own family became involved, he would behave as would other members of the clan in order to defend their honour. He would promote the rights of women for equal status with men, but would not tolerate liberated women in his own family.

Also, the intellectuals did not form a socially homogeneous group. Apart from individual ambitions, they were divided among themselves along different lines. For instance, the German-educated intellectual would despise those with French or English educational backgrounds. The French-trained would feel superior to all of them, and so on. But a

deep-rooted difference also developed along the ethno-linguistic lines. The Persian speakers, mostly Tajik from Kabul and other cities of the north, considered themselves more civilised and called the Pushtuns savages and their language and culture primitive. The Pushtuns fought for the Pashto language to be declared the only national and official language, rejecting Persian and its culture as belonging to Iran, a foreign country.

But for the common people all intellectuals were the same. The villagers did not consider an intellectual as one of their own; he was received as a stranger, as "a government official from the city," who did not speak the same language and did not behave in the way they were used to. Thus he was separated from the common people physically by his manners and Western clothes and morally by his value judgement and Western outlook; with the difference that the villager preserved his identity as a human being well integrated in his community, while the intellectual had lost his own cultural and social substance. This weakness made him vulnerable to the Marxist ideological offensive.

The common people were right to consider the intellectual as a government official, and not one of them. As there were no more private cultural institutions, and he himself was not in a position to create one of his own, he became entirely dependent on the government for employment. It was

the only way left for him to acquire a position of power, but it was also his weakness and his limitation. Thus he could not avoid becoming part of the government bureaucracy by seeking promotion in the administration.

On the whole the new Western school system opened the eyes of the people to the social, political, and economic conditions in industrialised countries, and, at the same time, showed them that a serious gap separated their country from the developed world. Even religious scholars, despite their strong tortoiseshell protective syndrome, felt the impact. Some of them started looking for references in the Qur'anic text, in favour of or against the new ideas. While the modern educated class pressed for sociopolitical reforms and for the creation of more humanly decent conditions in the country, the religious elements became more and more rigid. Instead of facing the problem, they ignored, and still ignore, the challenge; or simply rejected, and still reject, the new trends. The pre-20th-century classic intellectuals and the religious scholars were often in conflict, but there was always a meaningful dialogue between them. The modern intellectual, on the other hand, had no common language with the religious elite. The two hated one another; the latter calling the former a godless enemy of Islam and the former considering the latter as obscurantist, reactionary, and the cause of all the misery and backwardness of the country. This hostile relationship created serious problems for the

intellectual during the resistance against Soviet aggression: he ran away from one enemy, the communists, but in exile he came face to face with his old and more powerful opponents, the religious leaders.

Having learned new ideas about time, history, and rapid changes, educated groups in Third World countries became impatient. There were--and still are--vestiges of colonialism in the form of tyrants and dictators, oppression and vast misery among local peoples. The intellectuals did not believe that a process of evolution would achieve anything; in any event it would have been too slow a process for them. They wished to see changes in their own span of life. For this reason the myth of revolution in their eyes took on the form of a magic means to fulfill all their dreams. Revolution became the magical solution for all evil. In this respect, for a small number of them, "Marxism-Leninism" presented the most attractive prospect: it was magic with a scientific and rational appearance, a rational dream bound to succeed, with Marx presenting theoretical coherence and Lenin showing the practical ways to seize power in order to build the dream-land.

## The Modern Intellectual and Marxism

Educationally, modern intellectuals were trained in four different types of institutions: (1) inside Afghanistan (Kabul University, high schools, and technical colleges);

(2) in Arabic countries, especially Egypt where they were strongly influenced by new Islamic revolutionary ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood; (3) in the West (France, West Germany, UK, USA); (4) in the Eastern block (USSR, Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria). Marxist-oriented intellectuals came mostly from the West and the anti-Marxists from the East. In fact the West, especially the United States, inadvertently trained communists, and the Soviets produced anticommunists. Taraki and especially Amin (1978-1979), the first leftist heads of state, were trained respectively in British India and the US. Taraki also served as cultural press attaché in the Afghan Embassy in Washington. In the USSR only Afghan military staff, trained in special military centres and kept isolated from Soviet society, became hard-line pro-Soviet Afghan army officers. But most officers remained loyal to Afghanistan, and many Soviet-trained officers became effective resistance commanders. Other students in civil branches, engineering, medicine, etc., who lived for some years under the communist system where they had the opportunity to mix with locals, became neither communists nor pro-Soviet. But, in a way, back in Afghanistan they remained hostages of the Soviet system and the pro-Soviet Afghan communist party. Large numbers of these Soviet-educated intellectuals therefore fled from Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion of December 1979.

In the Soviet Union, civilian students were not hard

pressed to study and were given easy examinations and diplomas which the Soviet authorities had certified to be equivalent to Western M.A.s and Ph.D.s. But the actual level of scholarship was lower than the usual Western B.A. Thus in Kabul the Soviet-educated intellectuals found themselves in an inferior position vis-a-vis the Western-educated, and even the locally trained, people. Thus for their position they depended on their recognition by the Soviet Union and the support of the Afghan Marxist party. After the communist coup of 1978, when the Western-oriented and other liberal intellectuals were eliminated by being imprisoned, executed, or opting for exile, the Soviet-educated individuals filled their places, but served mostly as interpreters to Russian teachers. The most actively committed communists constituted a small group of people who were locally educated and who had never been abroad; they accepted as truth the Soviet propaganda image of the Western world as decadent and formed an idealised picture about the Soviet "socialist paradise."

Politically, the students and teachers of Kabul University and other colleges became more and more active during the constitutional period (1964-1973) when a relatively democratic atmosphere of freedom was restored. Two extremist political movements emerged: (1) the Marxist factions (Khalq and Parcham, the pro-Soviets, and Shola-e-Jawid, the Maoists); (2) the Muslim Youth Movement. Both trends had at least three points in common: they claimed to be equally

revolutionary, they received their ideologies and political inspiration from outside Afghanistan, and their activities were confined to the university and colleges, having no impact on the rural population. Parcham and Khalq were organised and manipulated by the Soviets (Arnold, 1983), and the Muslim Youth Movement was founded and led by Afghan intellectuals who had studied in Egypt and had been strongly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. Between these extremes, the majority of the educated people were vaguely apolitical, reformist, and nationalist. They were used by both the extreme groups in huge demonstrations and counter-demonstrations.

After the 1973 coup d'état, when Prince Daoud abolished the monarchy and proclaimed the republic with elements of Parcham important in the government, the Muslim Youth Movement lost the battle of the campus. Some of its leaders were arrested and executed; a number of its activists such as Burhanuddin Rabbani, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, Rasoul Sayaf, escaped and went into exile in Pakistan where they built the so-called fundamentalist resistance organisations. The majority of the liberal intellectuals remained behind. Daoud had already proved to be a strong dictator when he was prime minister from 1953 to 1963. When he came to power for the second time, he acted in the same manner, if not still harsher. He jailed and executed well-known liberal politi-

cians such as Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal* and his political friends, suspended the elected parliament and the free press, and banned political organisations. Despite his suppression of freedom and democratic institutions, his proclamation of the republic was projected as a revolutionary step forward. The intellectuals did not seem to perceive the disaster building up around them. The immediate reality was the shadow under the lamp.

The harsh awakening to the reality of the revolution was forced upon the intellectuals by the pro-Soviet Marxist party, which seized power through the military coup of April 1978. Hardly a month after the coup, a regime of terror was initiated. Educated people were jailed, tortured, and executed. Many others started fleeing the country with their families. For example, prior to the 1978 coup, the department of philosophy and social sciences at Kabul University had a teaching staff of 14 members--3 Ph.D.s, 6 M.A.s, and 5 B.A.s. Among these, 6--including a Ph.D. from West Germany--disappeared in prison; 8 left the country (4 of them are still in Peshawar). The Medical College had an academic staff of about 80 professors and lecturers. Of these, 8 were executed; about

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*There is still some controversy concerning the murder of Maiwandwal. Probably, Daoud had nothing to do with it, and the deed was done by Afghan police officers in the pay of the KGB [eds.].

45 became refugees; only 5 remained with the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. On the whole, from the 800 qualified teaching staff of Kabul University before 1978, some 75 were arrested and killed, about 550 became refugees in Western countries (USA, West Germany, France, etc.), and about 25 stayed in Peshawar. Among them, 8 became active in the administration of the resistance organisations. At the time of this writing some of them have already left for the USA, and others are expecting to leave; 13 others have found temporary jobs with Western humanitarian agencies for Afghan refugees stationed in Peshawar and are waiting to be accepted somewhere in the West (Majrooh and Elmi, 1987). Only 4 joined the armed resistance inside the country; 3 of them have been killed, and 1--Abdurrahman, a Ph.D. in psychology--is still fighting in Herat. The ones who remained behind were either old and retired and did not feel capable of starting a new life; young assistants, mostly opportunists who collaborated with the regime; or those without links with the resistance or the means to move out.

## Intellectuals and the Resistance

The terror of the Taraki-Amin regime (1978-1979) and the Soviet military invasion since 1979 demystified the revolution in the eyes of the educated. But the majority were not clear about what had to be done. A small number of them organised underground resistance groups, many were arrested,

and some others are still carrying out underground activities inside Kabul.

In exile, only those intellectuals who were members of or who had strong links with the Islamic resistance movements, especially with the revolutionary Islamic trend, stayed and became active in the Jihad (struggle), either as members of the administration of Afghan political parties in exile or as mujahideen commanders inside Afghanistan. But liberal and Western-trained or -oriented intellectuals faced serious problems in staying in Pakistan and integrating themselves into the resistance. There are internal and external reasons which might explain why the intellectuals failed to play a leading or at least a more active role in the national liberation struggle.

Their sense of self-importance and personal security made them leave Kabul in the first place because the Marxist regime no longer regarded highly educated individuals important. In order to survive or become someone within the Kabul regime, an individual had to submit to other norms which had nothing to do with his educational level. He had to become a member of the party, be "re-educated" by half-educated young party bosses, obey orders, and follow strict discipline. It was too much for his ego. Added to this, he felt physically in danger: his house could be searched any time during the night and his papers and books confiscated,

while he or other members of his family could be arbitrarily arrested, tortured, and sentenced to long prison terms.

On the other hand, he believed that by associating with the resistance his sense of self-importance and personal security would be fully restored. Naively he expected that the resistance political organisations in exile would receive him with open arms and provide him with a well-respected, well-paid position. He did not think that from the resistance point of view he would also need to be "re-educated," so as to be able to reassess the resistance situation and readapt to new conditions.

In reality he faced a phenomenon of double rejection: internally within himself and externally from outside forces.

The urban intellectual had nothing psychologically or socially in common with the rural population. Once among the refugees and resistance fighters, he was deep in the middle of the common people; but he found it hard to identify himself with the farmers and villagers who had become fighters and commanders. On the other hand, the latter did not automatically reject the intellectuals; on the contrary, they were inclined to respect them as men of knowledge and would like to have included them in their groups at the fighting front as doctors, advisors, organisers, educators, etc. The intellectuals, however, were unable to find the necessary inner motivation to do this: a solid

nationalistic-patriotic consciousness and a religious anti-communist emotional drive were both lacking. But to label intellectuals cowards who abandoned the cause of freedom would be too strong a judgement. Externally they were rejected by much stronger forces.

Because they did not perceive the new situation clearly, intellectuals were unable to analyse the forces that dominated the resistance. Consequently they were unable to visualize what kind of working relationship they could establish with it.

Two Islamic trends had become powerful in the resistance, namely, the traditionalists and the revolutionaries, and both were basically against secular-minded intellectuals. The traditional Islamic authorities such as the mullahs (priests), the maulawis (religious scholars), and the pirs (spiritual leaders) opposed the modern educational system from the start and now accused the people educated in the modern schools as having brought communist and other anti-Islamic ideas to the country. Once in power, especially after the communist takeover and the Soviet invasion, the religious elite thought it had found strong justification for its centuries-old opposition to modernisation trends. As for the intellectuals, who had found it extremely difficult to allow themselves to be "re-educated" by stupid, arrogant communist party members, it was even harder to obey orders

from narrow-minded, ignorant mullahs, so they were doomed from the start to be rejected by the traditionalists. A few of them were heroic enough to stay and work with the so-called "moderate" resistance organisations, but their working relationships with traditional religious elements were never easy. At the end of two or three years of time-consuming, nerve-racking efforts, most left for the USA, Western Europe, or elsewhere.

The revolutionary Islamic elements--the so-called fundamentalists--adopted a still stronger attitude of rejection. The modern intellectual was accused of being, if not a communist agent, at least a representative of the Western way of life and thinking. His ideas about "nation," "democracy," "individual freedom," "rights of women," etc., were enough to prove that he was the enemy of the "Islamic revolution." Since 1980, this type of intellectual came with his family to Peshawar (Pakistan) and tried to work for the resistance. But after meeting with the Afghan political leaders, doubts surfaced. During the first month of his stay in exile, he would receive anonymous, angry letters advising him to leave Pakistan and to go to the countries of his "Western masters." Physical threats would follow. With no job, no future prospects, no educational facilities for children, in addition to the physical danger, he had no other choice but to leave and seek shelter in a Western country.

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This short account describes the tragic fate of the Afghan intellectual inside his country and in exile. In Afghanistan he suffered as much as any other Afghan under the communist regime since 1978, but in exile he experienced much deeper frustrations from rejection by the resistance. While the classic type of intellectual--at least among the few who were still alive--was able to find an appropriate place among the mujahideen (resistance fighters) and muhajereen (refugees) and made valuable contributions to the national cause, the modern secular intellectual found himself shunned. Because of his internal contradictions, his social and cultural background, he was too weak to face the hostile forces against him which had been building up since 1978. The predominantly religious leaders of the resistance--traditionalists and revolutionaries alike--made it almost impossible for him to be of any use to his beleaguered country. But still, despite enormous personal difficulties, he cannot be excused entirely. He was expected to choose--not the relatively easy way of going into exile in a Western country, but the hard path of staying with his people, living with them in a war-ravaged country, sharing their misery, taking initiatives, making himself useful in any big or small way. In this way the modern intellectual would have rehabilitated himself and would have established the disrupted links with

his country, its culture, and its history. The Afghan resistance offered him an historic opportunity in this respect. But he seems to have missed this historic chance. Now the question is: When Afghanistan is free again, will those who have established themselves with their families in the West come back and make their contribution to the huge, challenging task of national reconstruction--or will they again miss the chance to serve?

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